

**U.S. Department of Justice**

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Eastern District of Virginia*

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2002**

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Norfolk, Virginia: Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that James Earl Wilson, Jr., age 20, of Newport News, Virginia, pled guilty in U.S. District Court today to 13 counts of robbery, three attempted robberies, conspiracy, and possession of a firearm by a felon. He is the last of three co-defendants to plead guilty in a case involving a string of 16 robberies and attempted robberies of fast food restaurants and video rental stores in four Hampton Roads cities between February and April of 2002. Each robbery count carries a maximum of 20 years in prison, and the firearm charge carries a maximum of ten years. The maximum sentence he could receive is 350 years in prison.

On Friday, Aug. 9, 2002, Taylor Renae Huey, age 20, of Poquoson, Virginia, also pled guilty to one count of conspiracy, 13 counts of robbery, and three counts of attempted robbery. The maximum sentence she could receive is 340 years in prison. In their guilty pleas, Huey and Wilson admitted participating in all 16 robberies and attempted robberies, including five in Newport News, two in York County, three in Hampton, and six in Virginia Beach.

The first to enter his plea was Matthew Lewis, Jr., age 27, of Newport News, Virginia, who pled guilty last week to ten of the 12 charges against him in the indictment. Specifically, he pled to one count of conspiracy and nine counts of robbery. Lewis admitted to participating in nine of the 16 robberies, including one in Newport News, three in Hampton, one in York County and four in Virginia Beach. The maximum sentence he could receive is 20 years in prison. Sentencing has been set for all three co-defendants in December 2002 and January 2003.

“These guilty pleas are especially significant because robbery is apparently on the rise throughout Eastern Virginia. To such violent criminals the message is clear: you will be caught and punished. I congratulate the many police officers and federal agents who worked tirelessly on this effort. They have brought to justice three criminals who were a menace to their communities” said Mr. McNulty.

The case was investigated through the mutual cooperation of Newport News, Hampton, York County and Virginia Beach robbery detectives, together with the FBI. Assistant United States Attorney Sherrie S. Capotosto is prosecuted this case.

